

What is claimed is:

1. A method for restricting access to information communicated between parties,
comprising:

first encoding of the information for obtaining a corresponding first encoded version
of the information;

5 second encoding of said first encoded version for obtaining a corresponding second
encoded version of the information;

wherein one of said first and second steps of encoding includes a step of deriving said
corresponding version so that a first party is substantially restricted from decoding the
information encoded therein without having access to a first decoding data;

10 wherein another one of said first and second steps of encoding includes a different step
of deriving said corresponding version so that a second party is substantially restricted from
decoding the information therein without having access to a second decoding data;

first providing, to the second party, said second encoded version;

performing a predetermined activity using an instance of the information;

15 second providing to the second party said second decoding data;

first decoding, by the second party, said second encoded version using said second
decoding data for obtaining said first encoded version; and

second decoding, by the second party, said first encoded version, obtained from said
step of first decoding, using said first decoding data for obtaining a decoded version of the
20 information.

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7. The method as claimed in Claim 6, wherein said predetermined activity is one of: a contest, a lottery, a drawing, and a sweepstakes.

8. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said step of first encoding includes said different step of deriving, and said step of second encoding includes said step of deriving.

9. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said step of deriving includes encrypting the information using a key from a public/private encryption key pair.

10. The method as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said different step of deriving includes encrypting the information using a secret key.

11. The method as claimed in Claim 1, further including a step of transmitting said first decoding data from the second party to the first party via a communications network.

12. The method, as claimed in Claim 1, wherein said second decoding data is a decryption key.

13. The method, as claimed in Claim 1, further including a step of comparing said instance of the information with said decoded version.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein one of said steps of first and second encoding uses one of an RSA encryption technique, a DES encryption technique, and a hashing technique.

15. The method of claim 1, further including a step of obtaining a decoder for performing one of said first and second decoding step from a trusted third party.

16. The method of Claim 15, wherein said step of obtaining includes downloading said decoder from an Internet website.

17. A method for restricting access to information communicated between parties, comprising:

first encoding of the information for obtaining a corresponding first encoded version of the information;

5 second encoding of said first encoded version for obtaining a corresponding second encoded version of the information;

wherein one of said first and second steps of encoding includes a step of deriving said corresponding version so that a first party is substantially restricted from manipulating the information encoded therein without having access to a first decoding data;

10 wherein another one of said first and second steps of encoding includes a different step of deriving said corresponding version so that a second party is substantially restricted from determining the information therein without having access to a second decoding data;

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first providing, to the second party, said second encoded version;
performing a predetermined activity using an instance of the information;
15 second providing to the second party said second decoding data;
first decoding, by the second party, said second encoded version using said second
decoding data for obtaining said first encoded version; and
second decoding, by the second party, said first encoded version, obtained from said
step of first decoding, using said first decoding data for obtaining a decoded version of the
20 information.

18. A method for verifying network communications between parties participating
in one of a game and contest, comprising:

activating an instance of an activity between at least a first party and a second party
using transmissions on the communications network, wherein said activity is one of a contest
5 and a game;

first transmitting between a third party and at least one of the first and second parties
a first version of activity related data for participating in said instance via communications on
the network;

second transmitting, via the communications network, one or more portions of a
10 second version of said data to said second party from one of said first party and said third
party prior to a termination of the instance, wherein said first and second versions are
expected to be identical by at least one of the first party and the second party;

requesting, via the communications network, by at least one of the first and second parties, that the third party verify that said first and second versions are identical.

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